

...2006 National Flood Safety Awareness Week...

The second annual National Flood Safety Awareness Week kicks off today and runs through March 24... 2006. National Weather Service offices throughout Montana are working together to provide information on why floods are a significant hazard in our state.

The goal of this campaign is to highlight some of the ways floods can occur...the hazards associated with floods...and what you can do to save your life and protect your property.

Flooding can occur anytime and anywhere in Montana. Floods can arrive within minutes or over a period of time. They can roll boulders the size of cars...destroy buildings and bridges...and take human lives.

Floods are the deadliest weather-related killer in the United States...averaging 106 deaths per year in the United States. Over half of flood related deaths occur when people drive into flooded roadways or simply walk through moving water. Six inches of fast-moving water can knock you off your feet. A depth of 2 feet will float most vehicles...including sport utility vehicles. While most floods cannot be prevented...there are simple steps you can take to protect your life and property.

These are just a few flood safety tips that will be repeated throughout the week:

- * If flooding occurs...move to higher ground immediately.
- * Do not allow children to play near high water...storm drains or ditches. Hidden dangers often lie beneath the water.
- * Flooded roadways can have significant damage hidden by floodwaters. Never drive on a flooded road.
- * Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams or washes...particularly when threatening weather conditions exist.
- * Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.

Additional information about flood safety awareness week is available at:

www.weather.gov/floodsafety

or through National Weather Service offices in Montana...

weather.gov/greatfalls

weather.gov/billings

weather.gov/glasgow

weather.gov/missoula